

Ajmer-Udaipur on Ahmedabad route on National Highway No.8 daily more than the load bearing capacity of this highway.

(b) if so, the number and ratio of these vehicles; and

(c) the measures being taken by the Government to remove this discrepancy ?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) and (b) The section of National Highway No.8 in question is carrying about 10,000 to 35,000 Passenger-Car-Units (PCUs) against the capacity norms of 15,000 PCUs per day for two laned road.

(c) The construction/development of National Highways is a continuous process. Out of 972 km length of the Delhi-Ahmedabad segment of N.H. 8, four laning of 141 km has already been completed and that for another 126 km is in various stages of completed and that for another 126 km is in various stages of progress. However, for widening the remaining length to four lane carriageway under BOT (Build-Operate-Transfer) basis, feasibility study has been initiated by the National Highways Authority of India working under the administrative control of the Ministry.

[English]

#### Joint Venture with Foreign Firms

2894. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY :  
SHRIMATI LAKSHMI PANABAKA :

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Hindustan Shipyard has explored the possibility of Joint Venture proposals with foreign companies;

(b) whether an agreement with the Norwegian Company has been finalised;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the State owned Hindustan Shipyard has accumulated losses to the order of Rs. 994 crores at present; and

(e) the time by which the offers of the foreign firms for reviving the Hindustan Shipyard are likely to be considered ?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Accumulated loss as per audited figures available for 1995-96 is Rs. 845.583 crores. The Government has recently restructured the capital base of the company by writing off of Govt. loans and interest thereon to the extent of Rs. 470.93 crores and conversion into equity to the tune of Rs. 120.20 crores.

(e) Action has since been initiated to examine the offer of Norwegian firm for Joint Venture.

#### Ravva Oil Field

2895. SHRI YELLAIAH NANDI : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the gas produced at Raava oilfield in the Krishna-Godavari basin would be piped to down stream consumers;

(b) whether an agreement was signed between the Gas Authority of India, Raava Joint Venture and Vedecon Petroleum with the Union Government in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the extent to which it is likely to benefit to the consumers in the State ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU) : (a) to (c) A gas sale contract has been signed on the 27th June, 1997 between Gas Authority of India Limited, nominee of Govt. of India and Ravva joint venture of Videocon Petroleum Ltd., Command Petroleum India and Ravva Oil (Singapore). About 0.7 MMSCMD of gas shall be supplied under this contract to meet the requirement of downstream consumers including power and fertilizer plants in Andhra Pradesh.

#### Conservation of Endangered Species

2896. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether a research centre for the conservation of the endangered species, is being set up at Hyderabad in collaboration with Central Zoo Authority of India;

(b) if so, whether India would be the third country which will have such a centre;

(c) the total amount involved in setting up this centre; and

(d) the extent to which the centre will be able to preserve species ?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI S.R. BOMMALI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Most of the developed countries have such facilities.

(c) The total cost of the project is Rs. 550.00 lakhs.

(d) The preservation of the wild animals would mainly depend upon the success of the Government in arresting the degradation of wildlife habitats and preventing poaching. The project can only help in developing ex-situ populations for augmenting the depleting population in wild.

#### Aircrafts Ground

2897. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether atleast 2 Airbus-A320 aircraft belonging to Indian Airlines (IA) had been ground at New Delhi during the last month owing to lack of engine spares;

(b) if so, for how many days these aircraft remained grounded;

(c) the reasons for not stocking the engine spares at the Headquarters of the Indian Airlines at New Delhi;

(d) its impact on the disruption of IA's flight services; and

(e) the steps being taken to procure presently the engine spares and to keep a stock thereof atleast at the principal stations of the Indian Airlines ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) to (e) The spares for V2500 engine of A-320 aircraft are stored at New Delhi. Necessary spares are also kept at other major stations.

#### Opening of ONGC Office

2898. SHRI G.A. CHARAN REDDY : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have received any proposal from Andhra Pradesh Government for setting up of a Regional Office of the Oil and Natural Gas Commission at Rajamundry;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which a final decision is likely to be taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU) : (a) to (c) Requests have been received from the Government of Andhra Pradesh for setting up a Regional Office of ONGC Ltd. at Rajahmundry (Andhra Pradesh). Krishna Godawari Project of ONGC Ltd. at Rajahmundry has been upgraded and the level of the Project Head has been increased from General Manager to Group General Manager with enhanced delegation of power. Giving further autonomy and delegation of power to the Project Head is under consideration of ONGC Ltd.

#### Air Service for Tiger Hill and Gangtok

2899. PROF. JITENDRA NATH DAS : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have conducted any survey for connecting Tiger Hill of Darjeeling and Gangtok of Sikkim by air;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) There is no aerodrome at Tiger Hill of Darjeeling and Gangtok in Sikkim, nor has any request been received from any scheduled airline operator or Government of Sikkim.

#### Tourism Projects in Tripura

2900. SHRI BAJU BAN BIYAN : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of Tripura has submitted proposals of developing of tourism in the State;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the number of projects sanctioned out of them?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA) : (a) to (c) Each year the Department of Tourism in consultation with the State Government prioritises projects for Central Financial Assistance. For 1997-98, the Department of